

**WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:**

- 1           1. A method for providing information for a user interface having  
2 included therein a plurality of regions, the method comprising:
  - 3                 defining a plurality of slice locations for a guide region of the user  
4 interface, wherein each slice location corresponds to a respective area and location in the  
5 guide region;
  - 6                 associating a plurality of guide slices for each of at least one slice location  
7 in the guide region;
  - 8                 encoding one or more guide slices for each slice location in the guide  
9 region; and
  - 10               transmitting one or more encoded guide slices for each slice location in the  
11 guide region.
- 1           2. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
  - 2                 associating one guide slice for each slice location in the guide region not  
3 associated with a plurality of guide slices.
- 1           3. The method of claim 1, wherein a plurality of sets of guide slices are  
2 transmitted for the plurality of slice locations in the guide region.
- 1           4. The method of claim 3, wherein the plurality of sets of guide slices are  
2 transmitted via time division multiplexing.
- 1           5. The method of claim 3, wherein one set of guide slices is transmitted  
2 for each group of pictures (GOP).
- 1           6. The method of claim 3, further comprising:
  - 2                 time-stamping each set of guide slices for presentation at a designated  
3 time.
- 1           7. The method of claim 3, wherein at least one set of guide slices  
2 comprises a partial set of guide slices in the guide region.

1               8. The method of claim 3, wherein the plurality of sets of guide slices are  
2 transmitted with a common packet identifier (PID).

1               9. The method of claim 3, wherein each of the plurality of sets of guide  
2 slices is transmitted with a respective packet identifier (PID).

1               10. The method of claim 1, wherein the transmitting includes  
2 continually transmitting a first set of guide slices for the plurality of slice  
3 locations in the guide region.

1               11. The method of claim 10, wherein the transmitting further includes  
2 transmitting one or more additional guide slices at a designated time

1               12. The method of claim 11, wherein the one or more additional guide  
2 slices are transmitted in response to a received request for the additional guide slices.

1               13. The method of claim 1, wherein the guide slices transmitted for the  
2 guide region are intra-coded.

1               14. The method of claim 1, wherein each transmitted guide slice includes  
2 a header indicative of a start location and a stop location for the guide slice.

1               15. The method of claim 1, wherein each transmitted guide slice includes  
2 a guide listing for a particular channel in the user interface.

1               16. A method for providing information for a user interface, comprising:  
2 defining a plurality of slice locations for at least a portion of the user  
3 interface, wherein each slice location corresponds to a respective area and location in the  
4 user interface;  
5               associating a plurality of slices for each of at least one slice location in the  
6 user interface;  
7               encoding one or more slices for each slice location in the user interface;  
8               and

transmitting one or more encoded slices for each slice location in the user interface.

1                    17. The method of claim 16, wherein the one or more encoded slices for  
2    each slice location includes guide data for an interactive program guide.

1                   18. A method for providing a user interface having included therein a  
2       plurality of regions, the method comprising:

3 receiving a bitstream comprising packets for a plurality of slices for a  
4 guide region of the user interface, wherein each slice is designated for presentation at a  
5 particular slice location in the guide region, and wherein multiple slices are transmitted  
6 for each of at least one slice location in the guide region;

7 retrieving from the bitstream packets for a set of slices for the guide  
8 region; and

decoding the retrieved packets to form the guide region of the user interface.

1                           19. The method of claim 18, wherein a plurality of sets of slices are  
2 received for the guide region, the method further comprising:

3 decoding packets for the plurality of sets of slices; and  
4 presenting the plurality of sets of slices in the guide region at times  
5 designated by the a header associated with the slices.

1                   20. The method of claim 18, wherein the plurality of sets of slices are  
2 presented in the user interface via time division multiplexing.

1                   21. The method of claim 18, further comprising:

2 receiving a user selection for a particular slice location of the guide region;  
3 retrieving from the bitstream packets for an additional slice associated with  
4 the selected slice location; and  
5 decoding the retrieved packets for the additional slice to form an updated  
6 user interface having included therein the additional slice.

1                   22. The method of claim 18, wherein each slice includes a header  
2 indicative of a start location and a stop location for the slice.

1                   23. The method of claim 22, wherein the header for each slice is a slice  
2 start code defined by MPEG-2 standard.

1                   24. The method of claim 22, wherein each decoded slice is presented at a  
2 location identified by the header.

1                   25. The method of claim 22, further comprising:  
2                   modifying a particular property of each of one or more decoded slices for  
3 presentation at locations on the user interface different from locations identified by  
4 headers of the decoded slices.

1                   26. The method of claim 18, further comprising:  
2                   recombining the slices for the guide region with slices for at least one  
3 additional region in the user interface.

1                   27. The method of claim 26, wherein the recombining is performed in  
2 accordance with a splicing syntax defined by MPEG-2 standard.

1                   28. A method for providing a user interface, comprising:  
2                   receiving a bitstream comprising packets for a plurality of slices for the  
3 user interface, wherein each slice is designated for presentation at a particular slice  
4 location in the user interface, and wherein multiple slices are transmitted for each of at  
5 least one slice location in the user interface;  
6                   retrieving from the bitstream packets for a set of slices for the user  
7 interface; and  
8                   decoding the retrieved packets to form the user interface having included  
9 therein the set of slices.

1                   29. The method of claim 28, wherein the one or more encoded slices for  
2 each slice location includes guide data for an interactive program guide.

1                   30. A terminal configured to provide a user interface having includes  
2 therein a plurality of regions, comprising:  
3                   a demodulator operative to receive and demodulate a modulated signal to  
4 provide a transport stream;  
5                   a transport de-multiplexer coupled to the demodulator and operative to  
6 receive and process the transport stream to provide a sequence of packets for a plurality  
7 of slices for a guide region of the user interface, wherein each slice is designated for  
8 presentation at a particular slice location in the guide region, and wherein multiple slices  
9 are transmitted for each of at least one slice location in the guide region; and  
10                  at least one video decoder coupled to the transport de-multiplexer and  
11 operative to receive and decode the sequence of packets to form the guide region of the  
12 user interface.

1                   31. The terminal of claim 30, further comprising:  
2                   a controller operative to receive a user selection for a particular slice  
3 location in the guide region and to direct the transport de-multiplexer to retrieve, from the  
4 transport stream, packets for an additional slice associated with the selected slice location,  
5 and  
6                   wherein the at least one video decoder is further operative to decode the  
7 retrieved packets for the additional slice to form an updated user interface having  
8 included therein the additional slice.